

on the palmyrah seedling, coral coloured sharp beak and red legs. But what is uncommon is the large numbers seen. Salim Ali in his THE BOOK OF INDIAN BIRDS states that it is a winter visitor in small numbers. I counted them dividing the area into smaller sections based on the land marks and counting in the direction opposite to their general movement they turned out to be 360+. They were foraging and moving in a generally southerly direction.

WILDLIFE WARDEN,
MUDUMALAI WILDLIFE SANCTUARY,
TEMPLETON COTTAGE, VANNARPET,
UDHAGAMANDALAM-643 001,
TAMIL NADU,
March 3, 1982.

Another striking characteristic was the spacing between adjacent individuals which was about 8-10 m. The spacing was consistent when two birds moved too close, one flew to the nearest opening available.

On enquiry from local cowherds I learnt that these birds arrived in small groups of 10 or 20, from about noon. They were unmindful of the grazing cattle. They were still foraging when I left at 4.30 p.m.

J. MANGALRAJ JOHNSON

8. PUDDLE-FEEDING OF FLAMINGOS *PHOENICOPTERUS ROSEUS* IN INLAND TANKS

In Koonthakulam (77.46 E., 8.29 N., 60 m above MSL) situated in Nanguneri Taluk, Tirunelveli District, Pelicans, Painted Storks, Little egrets, Cattle egrets, Cormorants, Night herons and Pond herons breed. The tank contains water generally between the months September and April depending on rains, letting in of water from Manimuthar and letting out of water for irrigation. The breeding generally coincides with availability of water in tanks of Koonthakulam and nearby tanks.

Flamingos (*Phoenicopterus roseus*) are seen feeding in small groups of 5 to 27, when the water is shallow. When there is heavy rainfall and tanks get filled with fresh water flamingos leave to return after 15-21 days. Now that we have taken up planting of *Acacia arabica* in the foreshores of the tank, I frequently enter the tank bed, which is partly or mostly dry and noticed that they could be approached very close as near as 30 m. It is then that I

noticed that they make a puddle with their feet continuously while feeding. The head is kept partly submerged in water or kept near the surface. They stand either very close to the edge of the water or in shallow areas where the depth of water is around 15 cm to 30 cm (as measured after the bird left). Keeping the head in the centre the legs are moved in quarter, semi- or three-quarter circles in clockwise and anticlockwise directions in slowly closing circles. While bringing the legs close to the head, the neck is bent but the head is kept in the same position continuously without lifting up the head. The puddling is effected by bending and lifting the legs and again thrusting into the tank bed ooze. While lifting legs the toes are partly closed. Flamingos found here are sometimes in breeding plumage. It has been reported earlier that Flamingos were fairly common throughout the Tirunel-

veli District and large flocks numbering 300 were seen in July 1898 (Stuart Baker in GAME

BIRDS OF INDIA, BURMA AND CEYLON. 1921, Vol. 1, page 4).

WILDLIFE WARDEN,
MUDUMALAI SANCTUARY,
UDHAGAMANDALAM 1,
TAMIL NADU,
March 4, 1983.

J. MANGALRAJ JOHNSON

9. OCCURRENCE OF LESSER FLAMINGO *PHOENICONAIAS MINOR* (GEOFFROY) IN POONA, MAHARASHTRA

Some eight kilometres west of Poona, lies the man-made lake of Pashan, along the stream named 'Ram Nadi'. Barring the summer hot weather season, the lake is fed by this stream. With the drying up of the shoreline, a large muddy expanse of the lake bed attracts a number of birds such as the Openbilled Storks, Painted Snipes, Yellow-wattled Lapwings in addition to the locally resident birds.

On the 29th of June 1982 a lone Lesser Flamingo (*Phoeniconaias minor*) was seen feeding along with two Openbilled Storks. This is the first time the former species has been seen in the area. The bird was uninjured and

when disturbed would fly away to the other edge of the lake. It roosted at the lake, as was confirmed one night by a friend.

We last saw this bird on the 17th of July 1982 and photographed it. The *Checklist* by H. Abdulali (1981) lists the bird as stray, in flocks or parties. While the *HANDBOOK*, Vol. 1 (1969) gives the bird an 'uncertain status' with birds seen all round the year; specimens recorded as far south as Bombay and Secunderabad, the latter city being south of Poona. The article of W. B. Trevenen (1922) writing on the birds of Poona does not mention this bird.

124/9 ERANDAVANA,
POONA-411 004,
January 21, 1983.

TAEJ MUNDKUR

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ALI, S. & RIPLEY, S. D. (1969) : Handbook of the

Birds of India and Pakistan. Vol. 1, Bombay. Oxford University Press.

TREVENEN, W. B. (1922) : Shikar near and around Poona, *J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.* 28 : 1075-1081.

10. SIGHTING OF RINGTAILED FISHING EAGLE AT VIHAR LAKE, GREATER BOMBAY

This is for the record of BNHS that on 7th August 1983 after the bird watching arranged by BNHS some of the members, including the

undersigned had walked to Vihar lake. At Vihar Lake among a large gathering of about 25 Brahminy kites (*Haliastur indus*), both